

WORLD

Drone disrupts air traffic into Newark

New York, United States

A drone briefly disrupted air traffic Tuesday at Newark airport, one of New York's three major hubs for air traffic, US officials said.

There were no further drones sighted, and arrivals were allowed to resume after a short suspension, a Federal Aviation Administration spokesman told AFP.

The FAA ordered a ground stop for other flights heading

to Newark, however, until the "backlog" of arrivals landing at the airport were cleared.

"Around 5:00 pm, we received two reports from incoming flights into Newark that a drone was sighted at about 3,500 feet (1,070 meters) above Teterboro," another nearby airport in New Jersey, the spokes-



Tonga: Whole country cut off from Facebook, YouTube

Nuku'alofa, Tonga

Tonga has been plunged into virtual cyber darkness after an undersea cable broke, cutting off the Pacific island kingdom from almost all cell phone and Internet services.

While life without the Internet may be considered a paradise for many, Tonga relies heavily on links with the outside world for daily supplies and vital tourist earnings, and faced "an absolute disaster"



Representative picture

as officials struggled to fix the problem.

"We are all heavily tied to the Internet for doing business and for the government," Mary Fonua, editor of the online news

service Matangi Tonga said yesterday.

"There's no Facebook, which is how the Tongan diaspora communicate with each other, businesses can't get orders out, airlines can't take bookings for passengers or freight."

While the authorities look into the cause and struggle to find a solution, they have turned to a small, locally operated satellite connection as back-up.

In the meantime non-essential social media sites like Face-

book have been blocked to preserve much-needed bandwidth.

The restricted access also meant serious problems getting money transfers.

Tonga Cable, which administers the 827-kilometre (514-mile)cable between Tonga and Fiji, said Internet traffic had to be prioritised until repairs were completed, and in the meantime social media websites may be blocked while the country of 110,000 relies on makeshift connectivity.

Two drowned Saudi sisters committed suicide: US medical examiner

New York, United States |

Two Saudi sisters whose bodies were found taped together on the banks of a New York river committed suicide, the city's medical examiner said on Tuesday.

Rotana Farea, 22, and her sister Tala, 16, were found beside the Hudson River in late October with no visible signs of trauma, dressed all in black with fur-trimmed coat collars.

They were tied together at the ankles and waist by duct tape.

"My office determined that the death of the Farea sisters was the result of suicide, in which the young women bound themselves together before descending into the Hudson River," Chief Medical Examiner Barbara Sampson said.

Fatimah Baeshen, spokeswoman for Saudi Arabia's US embassy in Washington, tweeted that "Reports that we ordered anyone related to the Saudi sisters, Tala and Rotana Farea, God rest their souls, (who recently died tragically in NY), to leave the US for seeking asylum; are absolutely false."

Tunisia mother faces trial for racism against teacher

Tunis, Tunisia

A woman faces trial in the eastern Tunisian city of Sfax under a new anti-racism law for allegedly hurling insults at a teacher who threw her daughter out of class. They said the woman, who rushed to school after a phone call from the girl to say she was being expelled, had insulted the teacher over the colour of his skin.

She was detained on Tuesday, three days after the incident. The spokesman for the prosecutor's office, Murad Turki, said the woman was being held in custody pending trial next week on racism charges under the law passed in October 2018 and for insulting a public sector worker.

Floods, landslides kill at least eight in Indonesia



Indonesian soldiers evacuate flood-affected residents in Makassar

Jakarta, Indonesia

At least eight people have been killed and thousands forced to evacuate their homes after heavy rain triggered devastating flash floods and landslides in Indonesia, authorities said yesterday.

Heavy rain and strong winds buffeted parts of Sulawesi island overnight, swelling rivers that burst their banks and inundated dozens of villages in nine southern districts, as well as parts of the provincial capital Makassar.

Five people were found dead

in Jeneponto district, while three people were killed in Gowa, Indonesia's disaster mitigation agency said.

At least four people are missing but authorities say data is still being collected across hard-hit areas.

"Extreme rain that started to fall on (Tuesday) in several areas of South Sulawesi caused the flooding," agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said in a statement. Footage showed rivers overflowing with water spreading across vast swathes of land, flooding rice fields and submerging cars.

The flooding has forced thousands of residents to flee

their homes and destroyed two bridges.

"Boats and food assistance for evacuees is still needed," Nugroho said.

"(Rescuers) are still searching for the missing."

Heavy rains and the extent of flooding has hampered search efforts, authorities said.

Landslides and flooding are common in Indonesia, especially during the monsoon season between October and April, when rain lashes the vast tropical archipelago.

In October, flash floods and landslides killed at least 22 people in several districts across Sumatra island.



An aerial view of the flood situation in Gowa, Sulawesi.

Hacker uses Nest camera to broadcast nuke alert

San Francisco, United States

Nest urged owners of its security cameras Tuesday to use enhanced authentication to thwart hackers, after one terrified a family with a hoax nuclear missile attack.

A couple living in a California town near San Francisco told local media they experienced "sheer terror" over the weekend when a Nest security camera atop their family's television issued a realistic-sounding warning of missiles heading to the United States from North Korea.

The couple and their frightened child eventually figured out they had been targeted by a hacker who got control of speakers built into the camera, which is equipped for two-way conversations.

Nest, which is owned by Google-parent Alphabet, told AFP that incidents of commandeered camera control in recent months were the result

of hackers using passwords stolen from other online venues.

"Nest was not breached," Google said in a statement.

"These recent reports are based on customers using compromised passwords - exposed through breaches on other websites."

Reported incidents involving Nest cameras in the US in the past three months include a hacker threatening to snatch a baby and a seemingly well-intended hacker telling someone that his data was exposed.

Nest camera users were urged to prevent such invasions by implementing two-factor verification, meaning that a second step such as entering a code sent via text message is needed along with a password to get into an account.

People can check online at sites such as www.haveibeenpwned.com to see whether their email addresses have been found in troves of stolen data.



Philippine lawmakers back bill to jail 12-year-olds

Manila, Philippines

Children as young as 12 years old could be incarcerated under a bill backed by Philippine lawmakers on Wednesday which has been attacked by the UN and rights monitors.

Duterte's allies had originally proposed lowering the "age of criminal liability" to nine, but after mounting out-

rage the lower House of Representatives raised it to 12 and passed the bill on the second reading.

The current age at which children are held criminally liable in the Philippines is 15.

If the Senate approves it the Philippines would join countries like Afghanistan which punish 12-year-old children for criminal acts.

NOTICE

With regard to the cancellation of

the Investment Business Firm-Category 3 license of "Islamic Finance Consultants B.S.C. (c)"

With reference to the Resolution of the Governor of the Central Bank of Bahrain No. (3) of 2019 pertaining to the cancellation of the Investment Business Firm-Category 3 license of "Islamic Finance Consultants B.S.C. (c)" issued on 7th Jumada 1 1440H, corresponding to 13th January 2019, the Central Bank of Bahrain hereby provides notice that the Investment Business Firm-Category 3 license of "Islamic Finance Consultants B.S.C. (c)" issued on 15th March 1999, registered under commercial registration no.42850-1 has been cancelled, with effect from the date of issuing and publication of the above resolution in the Official Gazette.